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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, CINDY

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2171

DATE MAILED: 04/23/2004

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/749,639

Applicant(s)

GOEL ET AL.

Examiner

Cindy Nguyen

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– The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address –

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02/27/04.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 14-20 and 25-36 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 4-13 and 21-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 28 December 2000 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 19, 23.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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DETAILED ACTION

This is in response to request for amendments filed 02/17/04.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 02/17/04 has been entered.

1. Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

2. Claims 1, 2, 4-13, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Wu (U.S 5991756).

Regarding claims 1 and 21, Wu discloses: A method and a computer program for performing a category search to identify categories of items that relate to a search term, the method comprising:

receiving at least one search term, wherein the search term includes at least one search term word (col. 6, lines 51-62, Wu);

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comparing the search term with a hierarchy of category identifiers to determine whether matches exist, wherein comparing the search term with the hierarchy of category identifiers includes comparing the search term word with one or more words in the hierarchy of category identifiers (col. 6, lines 63 to col. 7, lines 23, Wu);

identifying at least one matching category identifier based on the matches that are determined to exist between the search term word and the words of the hierarchy of category identifiers (col. 6, lines 63 to col. 7, lines 23, Wu);

comparing the search term word with terms related to one or more categories to determine whether matches exist (col. 6, lines 63 to col. 7, lines 23, Wu), wherein the terms related to one or more categories include a name and a description of a web site corresponding to category (col. 5, lines 46-62, Wu);

identifying at least one matching category identifier based on the matches that are determined to exist between the search term word and the terms related to one or more categories (col. 7, lines 42 to col. 8, lines 5, Wu);

displaying the matching category identifiers (fig. 5 and corresponding text, Wu).

Regarding claim 2, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 1. In addition, Wu discloses: receiving at least one search term comprises:

receiving several search terms (col. 3, lines 24-44, Wu), and

grouping the search terms received as a single string (col. 6, lines 51-62, Wu);

comparing the search term with the hierarchy of category identifiers comprises comparing the single string of search terms with the hierarchy of category identifiers to determine whether matches exist (col. 6, lines 51 to col. 7, lines 36, Wu); and

comparing the search term with the terms related to one or more categories comprises comparing the single string of search terms with the terms related to one more categories to determine whether matches exist (col. 6, lines 51 to col. 7, lines 5, Wu).

Regarding claim 4, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 1. In addition, Wu discloses: wherein the hierarchy of category identifiers comprises an ordered list of category names arranged in order from broad categories to narrow categories with the narrowest category being a final category name (col. 5, lines 46-62 and col. 6, lines 31-50, Wu).

Regarding claim 5, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 1. In addition, Wu discloses: wherein displaying at least a category identifier includes communicating at least a category identifier based on the matches that are determined to exist with the hierarchy and the terms (fig. 2 and corresponding text, Wu).

Regarding claim 6, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 1. In addition, Wu discloses: wherein displaying at least a category identifier includes displaying several category identifiers, the method further comprising ranking the category identifiers based on a number of the matches that are determined to exist and at least one of locations and types of the matches (col. 5, lines 46-62 and fig. 5, Wu).

Regarding claim 7, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 6. In addition, Wu discloses: wherein ranking the category identifiers based on the location

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of the matches includes ranking the category identifiers based on the relative location of the matches within the hierarchy of category identifiers (col. 4, lines 40 col. 5, lines 6, Wu).

Regarding claim 8, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 6. In addition, Wu discloses: wherein the ranking the category identifiers based on the types of the matches includes ranking the category identifiers based on whether the matches occur with at least one of the terms related to one or more categories or with the hierarchy of category identifiers (col. 6, lines 31-62, Wu).

Regarding claims 9 and 11, all the limitations of these claims have been noted in the rejection of claims 8 and 6 above, respectively. In addition, Wu discloses: wherein category identifiers that include matches that occur with both the hierarchy of category identifiers and the terms related to one or more categories are ranked higher than category identifiers that include matches that occur with only one of the hierarchy of category identifiers and the terms related to one or more categories (col. 6, lines 31-50, Wu).

Regarding claim 10, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 6. In addition, Wu discloses: wherein category identifiers that include matches that occur with more than one type are ranked higher than category identifiers that include matches that occur within only one of the types (col. 6, lines 31-50, Wu).

Regarding claim 12, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 6. In addition, Wu disclose: wherein the hierarchy of category identifiers comprises an ordered list of category names arranged in order from broad categories to narrow categories with the narrowest category being a final category name such that category identifiers that include matches that occur with the final category name of the hierarchy of category names are ranked

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higher than category names that include matches that occur at a location other than the final category name (col. 5, lines 46-62 and col. 6, lines 31-50, Wu).

Regarding claim 13, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 1. In addition, Wu discloses: wherein the items comprise web sites (col. 3, lines 46-62, and fig. 5, Wu).

3. *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 22 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu (U.S. 5991756) in view of Snow et al. (U.S. 6055540) (Snow).

Regarding claim 22, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 21 above. However, Wu didn't disclose: wherein the computer readable medium comprises a propagated signal. On the other hand, Snow discloses: wherein the computer readable medium comprises a propagated signal (col. 13, lines 56-57, Snow). Thus, at the time invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to include a propagated signal in the system of Wu as taught by Snow. The motivation being to enable the user to know the length of time to send and receive the electronic information in the network system.

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Regarding claim 23, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 22 above. In addition, Wu/Snow disclose: wherein the propagated signal comprises a carrier wave (col. 13, lines 56-57, Snow).

5. Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 14-20 and 25-36 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art of record and that encountered while searching for the claimed invention fails to anticipate and/or suggest: a method and a computer program for performing a search to identify items and categories of items that relate to search term, comprising: the matches between the search term and the list of previously received search terms are displayed as a list of related search terms that were entered for previously performed searches as recited in claims 14 and 25.

Regarding claims 15-20 and 26-36, these claims depend from claims 14 and 25 above respectively and are therefore allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

6. Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cindy Nguyen whose telephone number is 703-305-4698. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F: 8:00-5:00.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Safet Metjahic can be reached on 703-308-1436. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-7239 for regular communications and 703-746-7240 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

CN

Cindy Nguyen
April 9, 2004

Wayne
WAYNE AMSBURY
PRIMARY PATENT EXAMINER